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Amendments to the quarantine regulations regarding rags imported into the United States.

[Department Circular No. 18.]

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL
MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE,
Washington, D. C., February 14, 1900.

*To officers of the Treasury Department, State and
local quarantine officers, and others concerned:*

The following amendments to the regulations regarding rags and similar articles imported into the United States are hereby promulgated :

QUARANTINE REGULATIONS TO BE OBSERVED AT FOREIGN PORTS AND
AT SEA.

Article IV, paragraph 6, Quarantine Regulations to be observed at Foreign Ports and at Sea, is amended to read as follows :

All rags and textile fabrics used in the manufacture of paper and for other purposes, which are collected, packed or handled in any foreign port or place, with the exceptions as hereinafter specified, shall, prior to shipment to the United States, be subjected to disinfection by one of the prescribed methods. (Old jute bags, old cotton bags, old rope, new cotton or linen cuttings from factories, not included.)

The disinfection of the articles mentioned herein shall be performed under the supervision of a United States consul or a medical officer of the United States, and a certificate in duplicate, signed by said consul, or medical officer, shall be issued with each consignment of same, which certificate shall identify the articles, and state that they have been disinfected in accordance with the United States quarantine regulations. The original certificate of disinfection shall be attached to the consignee's invoice, and, where the articles are carried by sea, the duplicate certificate of disinfection shall be attached to the bill of health issued to the vessel conveying same.

Exception.

Such articles shipped from the Dominion of Canada directly to the United States shall be exempt from this requirement if accompanied by affidavits demonstrating to the satisfaction of the collector of customs at the port of arrival that they have actually originated in Canada and have not been shipped from a foreign country to Canada, and thence shipped to the United States ; and further, that the port or place where collected or handled has been free from quarantinable disease for thirty days prior to shipment.

QUARANTINE REGULATIONS TO BE OBSERVED AT PORTS AND ON THE
FRONTIERS OF THE UNITED STATES.

Article 1, paragraph 3, Quarantine Regulations to be observed at ports and on the frontiers of the United States is amended to read as

follows: In making the inspection of a vessel, the bill of health and clinical record of all cases treated during the voyage, crew and passengers' lists and manifests, and when necessary, the ships' log shall be examined. The crew and passengers shall be mustered and examined and compared with the lists and manifests, and any discrepancies investigated. When a freight manifest shows that rags and other articles of this class are carried by the vessel, a certificate of disinfection, signed by a United States consul or a medical officer of the United States, shall be exhibited and compared with same.

If no certificate of disinfection is produced, the collector of customs at the port of entry shall be notified of same by the quarantine officer. The collector of customs shall then hold such consignment in a designated place separate from other freight pending the arrival of the certificate of disinfection; and in the event of its nonarrival, the articles shall be disinfected as hereinbefore prescribed, or shall be returned by the common carrier conveying same.

ARTICLE XII—*Canadian and Mexican frontiers.*

The following paragraph is hereby added to Article XII, relating to rags arriving at ports on the Canadian frontier:

Paragraph 12. Rags gathered and baled in Canada, accompanied by affidavits that the ports or places where collected or handled were free from quarantinable disease for thirty days prior to shipment, may be admitted to entry; but rags from foreign ports shipped through Canada shall not be admitted to entry, unless they are accompanied by a certificate of a United States consul or medical officer of the United States that they have been disinfected in accordance with the United States quarantine regulations.

Foreign rags, not originating in Canada, but shipped through Canada to ports in the United States, will not be admitted to entry by collectors of customs unless accompanied by the above-named certificate, or until after they have been unbaled and disinfected as required by the United States quarantine regulations.

Approved: WALTER WYMAN,
Supervising Surgeon-General M. H. S.
O. L. SPAULDING, *Acting Secretary.*

Plague on the island of Cozumel, Mexico.

FEBRUARY 28, 1900.

Sometime ago the Surgeon-General of the Marine-Hospital Service addressed letters to certain quarantine officers directing them to ascertain what possible danger there might be of infection of bubonic plague reaching the United States through Mexico. To-day he received information that the plague exists, and has existed probably for several weeks in the Island of Cozumel, which is off the east coast of Yucatan,